

# NEWSLETTER

Newsletter 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024



*“Master, dismiss your servant in peace, according to your word;  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples. (Luke2:25)*

**Dear Everyone** – Greetings for the beginning of February, hoping this month will be healthier and at least a bit more Spring-like for us all to enjoy.

**Listening to God:** We have been focusing on “Listening to God in our Services”, attending to what might be happening as we go about our lives and sharing what we have discerned. But equally as important is looking, watching, and being aware of all that is about us that is silent, wordless. We don’t always need words to tell us of the work of God. Really seeing, not just looking at objects that maybe we take for granted, can lift our hearts and make us more aware of them and the God-given human ingenuity that has led artists, engineers, scientists to create them. Nature is truly beautiful, that is true, but so are the creations made by human beings from their inventions, and sheer ingenuity. I love, for example walking along the Thames and looking at the many bridges that span it, their shapes, structures, colours and their use. The different as well as being shapes of the buildings in the city; how they were planned, designed and erected to hold so many people and fulfill so many different function. Industrial art is just as amazing as other kinds of art. What do you think? Which non-verbal creations speak to you I wonder? How do they help you speak of God and the gifts we have been given to create such things?



*“Galvanise Steel” Sculpture by Anthony Gormley*



*Remains of the old Blackfriars Bridge*

**Bring and Share Lunch:** As usual the popular Bring and Share lunch was held last Sunday with a variety of delicious food which was enjoyed by everyone. Thank you to those who contributed. It is such a good time of companionship and talk between members of our church family.

**Just to remind you** that while we take lots of photographs of what we do in Services and events, and thanks to Kelly for taking them, **If you do not want your photograph published** please let Kelly or myself know and we will make sure it is not.



**Bible Study:** As mentioned on Sunday, Kamran would like to hear from you if you are interested in joining in with Bible Study sessions throughout Lent. These will take place on Thursday evenings in church or by zoom starting at 6.30pm. Please let him know.

**URGENT MESSAGE RE The TODDLER GROUP:** This is just a reminder that we desperately need more volunteers to help on Tuesdays if the Toddler group is to continue. If you feel able to help with this or **know anyone who would like to do so**, please let Kamran or Tracey know on 020 8455 1873. It need not be every Tuesday but if we could get a Rota of people it would be so good and we could keep the Toddler Group going. Thank you.



**Diary of Yearly Service Celebrations:** Attached to the newsletter, as an extra page, is a time-line of Services and Events that are taking place throughout the year. It will be helpful as an Aide-Memoir to put on your Kitchen notice board or in your mobile phone.

**Future Events – Ideas:** As mentioned last week It has been suggested it would be a good idea to plan for a variety of events, paced throughout the year, that we could join in together. The PCC has discussed this and will be giving further information via the Newsletter and in announcements in notices in church. Ideas still welcome.

**Geoffrey and Music:** Geoffrey, our long-standing and gifted organist, has written a piece below telling us of the concerts that are put on in Hampstead that you might like to enjoy. Geoffrey frequently organizes and participates in concerts in our area, with a number of other accomplished musicians, which are a delight. The information is below.

**Baptism/Confirmation classes:** Please let Kamran know if you, or any member of your family, would like to be confirmed. Now we have a newly appointed Bishop of Edmonton (Revd Canon Dr Anderson Jeremiah) it will be great to have him confirm members of our church family.

**Wednesday Morning Coffee: from 10.30am-12noon.** Our time of gentle exercise is going well followed by coffee and a chat – and it is fun - so do come and join in. At 12noon we have a short communion service.

**Facebook page:** For those of you who are on facebook, Kamran has set up a Golders Green Church facebook page. You can join it by going to facebook and searching for [Golders Green Parish Church](#). So far we have 4 followers!

**Florence Li Tim Oi:** Last week was the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Priesting of Florence Li Tim Oi in China in 1944.



Li Tim Oi was the first woman to be ordained as a priest in the Anglican Communion. She was ordained in China on 25 January 1944. Her story is an amazing one of courage and perseverance as well as that of the serving Anglican Bishop, Bishop Hall who, against all the rules, ordained her and suffered for it, because he recognized she was a woman of great faith and was needed in the area in which she served as a deaconess. Her large parish had no priestly care as the priests had left either to fight or escape. Li Tom Oi, stayed and served the people with love, faith and courage. Her story gave great strength to those of us who campaigned for women to be priests and become bishops. I was fortunate to meet her twice when she came to the UK as a much older woman, so we could celebrate her life and thank her for all she did.

The Anniversary of her priesting was celebrated last Thursday at St Martin-in-the-Fields when many of us came together, to meet up, remember and rejoice. Many, women and men, ordained and lay, attended. A number of us you could call, “the foot soldiers”, who had campaigned long and hard for many years rejoiced to be together. The service (which was broadcast on the BBC Sunday programme) was taken by Bishop Hall’s granddaughter, the Revd Francis Shoesmith, and provided such a relevant link for us. The Bishop of London, the Revd Dame Sarah Mullally, was present. The Rt Revd Rose Hudson Wilkin, Bishop of

Dover preached, a sermon of apt analysis on how things are in the present time, while congratulating the strength of ordained women past and present.

Below is the story of Li Tim Oi, reprinted with permission by the Revd Christina Rees who is the acting chair of The Li Tim Oi Foundation that raises money to pay for the training of women in Africa and India who wish to be ordained but who couldn't afford to do so. Her story is one of fortitude, courage, patience, deep faith and stamina. It really is a story of a woman who "Listened to God".

**With love and good wishes – Sally**

**Florence Li Tim Oi: A Story of Faith and Perseverance  
as told by the Revd Christina Rees CBE**



*Christina Rees, acting Vice Chair of the Li Tim Oi Foundation  
with Elaine Storkey and myself at the Anniversary Service*

Florence Li Tim-Oi, she was an amazing woman and the first woman to be ordained as a priest in the Anglican church. Her story is extraordinary. It starts back on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May in 1907, in China, a little fishing village on Hong-Kong Island. Her mother was just about to give birth to her and in those days when women were about to give birth there would often be a little bowl filled with ash, because if the baby was a girl the parents would have the option of smothering her face in the ash, because sons were so much preferred. But Tim-Oi's parents were Christians, and they were delighted to have a daughter. Her name, Tim-Oi, actually means, Much-Beloved, so she was wanted and they gave her every opportunity they could, but with siblings and with life the way it was in those days, there weren't enough funds for her to finish school until she was 27 years old. After that, a few years forward, she became a deaconess in the church there in China, and then she started a four-year course of study of theology ending up becoming a deacon. Of course in those days, by this time it was 1941, there was no chance of women becoming priests, but fast forward, her Bishop was an Englishman called R O Hall, and he could tell that she had already been given by God the gift of priesthood. So, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 1944, right towards the end of the Second World War, when China had suffered so much, Tim-Oi had been posted to a Portuguese settlement called Macau, and she was tending for people there, ministering to them, sometimes in incredibly practical ways, going from house to house and bringing a little rice or something else to eat, as well as ministering to them as a deaconess in terms of what she brought in the way of Christ. And people absolutely loved her and trusted her.

Anyway, she got a message from Bishop Hall asking her to meet him at a designated time. She had a very dangerous and arduous journey back through Japanese lines, arriving within 20 minutes of when Bishop Hall arrived at their rendezvous place. He told her what he wanted to do, and she accepted. And so on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 1944, she was ordained a priest in the Church of God. Bishop Hall said, she was a priest of God in

the Church of God, even though she was within the Anglican church. After that there were repercussions both for Bishop Hall and for Tim-Oi.

She had taken the name Florence on her baptism for two reasons: because she'd been born in May, in springtime when all the flowers are out, *Florence*, flowers. She was a great admirer of Florence Nightingale, and so that's how she ended up with a Western first name, Florence, and then her Chinese name, Li Tim-Oi.

The upshot of her becoming ordained as a priest was that it was either going to be Bishop Hall or Tim-Oi who would have to resign. (*The Hierarchy in the Church of England were furious at this blatant disregard of the rules against women*) She insisted that it wasn't to be the Bishop who resigned. She said, 'I will give up my licence, but I won't give up my holy orders.' She never gave up her holy orders, and in time she was able to take up her ministry again openly as a priest. Of course, when Bishop Hall got back to England, there were huge problems. All the other Bishops were very angry at him, they were outraged that he had gone ahead and done this. But from then on the question of women's ordination began to be debated more and more on the once every ten-year Lambeth Conference. Of course, every year, it was decided, 'No, we can't go ahead, we can't ordain women' for a variety of reasons.

The next women who were to be ordained as priests were two women, again in China, in 1971. It was after that in 1974, that the first eleven women were ordained as priests in the Episcopal Church in the United States, but it wasn't until 1992 that women got the vote to become priests in the Church of England, and it spread and has spread around so many of the provinces across the Anglican communion. Not only are women now able to be priests, but there are many women bishops in the Anglican church. I am very sorry to report that on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January this year, Bishop Ellinah Wamukoya, the Bishop of Swaziland, who was also a very keen global advocate for fighting climate change and caring for the environment, died of COVID, which is a great tragedy and a great loss, and we send our love and our sympathy to her family, her friends, everyone in her diocese and all those who knew her and benefitted from her ministry.

So what happened to Li Tim-Oi is an exciting adventure tale in its own right and many twists and turns, but eventually she moved to Toronto, Canada, to be with some of her family members who'd already moved there. But in 1984, she came to England. She was invited to England to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her ordination, coming to Westminster Abbey and then Sheffield Cathedral (*on another visit she went to Canterbury Cathedral where many "Women and the Church" members met her*). She visited many other places. Everywhere she went people were so touched by her, because she was petite, incredibly humble, very modest, but she had this profound effect on people. They felt they had seen something more of Christ when they came into contact with Li Tim-Oi. She was also invited to Lambeth Palace, the London Headquarters of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Archbishop of Canterbury was at that time Robert Runcie. He was unsure about whether to move forward with ordaining women as priests or not and a bit equivocal about it. After having time talking to Tim-Oi, he later said, 'Who am I to say who God can or cannot call?' The meeting with her was a turning point for him, it helped him along the journey to understand that God calls people not based on whether they're male or female, but on the state of their hearts and the gifts they have been given.

Tim-Oi lived until she was 85 years old, and she died on 26<sup>th</sup> of February 1992. Two years after that, her dear sister, Rita Lee Chiu, met with the son of the Bishop who had ordained Tim-Oi. His name is Canon Christopher Hall, and he had known Tim-Oi when he was a little boy, in China, when his father was the Bishop there. Canon Christopher Hall got together with Tim-Oi's sister, Rita, and they thought about what could they do

that would provide a fitting legacy for this amazing woman, who had been a pioneer, a ground-breaker, an amazingly faithful, dedicated, strong and courageous disciple of Jesus Christ? They decided to start up the Li Tim-Oi Foundation, a foundation that gives grants to women across the Anglican Communion, across the Globe for education in order to equip them for positions of leadership and influence in their churches, their diocese and in the wider communities. In the years the Foundation has existed, it has now helped over 700 women to gain degrees and to go on to do an amazing range of ministries and also other kinds of work; They have become priests and chaplains, pastors and evangelists, youth workers and theological educators; so many roles for women, and also, community workers and women who work with street children, who work on children's nutrition and psychologists and counsellors and IT specialists and legal advisors and now, more recently, doctors and nurses.

A number of years ago, I was able to go on a research trip for the Foundation into East Africa, to see what these women were doing now that they'd had been equipped to do this training. I saw what their lives were like; how had they changed; if so, in what ways? What I heard was the most amazing stories over and over again, of not only their lives that had been transformed, but also how they went on to transform the lives of the people around them. They became true agents of change. Some of these women were able to stand up against traditional practices and customs that have for so long damaged and harmed women and girls; customs like female genital mutilation; to speak out about that, to bring some greater clarity and factualness about the causes of HIV/AIDS and also the cures. I saw that these women were making profound differences for the people around them. I can highlight just a few of these extraordinary women that I met; one was a very young woman in her twenties from Kenya, called Rosemary Maina, and she had been ordained as a priest, and still in her twenties she was in charge of a very large parish in a very rural area. She was thriving with a fantastic lay team keeping it going, and an absolutely packed Sunday school, with so much to say. What I am pleased to say about Rosemary is that many years later, she got back in touch with the Foundation, and said, 'I would like to go on and do a further degree in counselling psychology because some of the issues that people are coming to me with, I now can't answer. I would like to be equipped even more and get a further degree'. So now the Foundation gives further degrees to women who show that it will be really important to their ministry to have this additional education. Now Rosemary has graduated and adds all the benefits of her most recent course to her long experience and practice as a priest.

Someone else that I met, was a woman from Uganda, Kampala, called Susan Ameso. She had initially trained as an accountant because she saw that it was really important to keep the finances in order, to have integrity and accountability in the whole financial area. She did that for a while and then went on to become ordained and went on to do years of the most extraordinary ministry, particularly in an area that had suffered a catastrophic massacre. She and a small team went into the area and worked with people who were suffering severe trauma and stress after this massacre. They were the survivors. She worked with them for years and did so many other things. She returned to Kampala and more recently is now the assistant to the Archbishop of Uganda. So these and so many other women have really taken on a whole new role that previously would have been denied them. I could go on telling their stories, but the reality is that this work is still so very much needed. We know that things are not equal for women and girls around the world. Women and girls bear the brunt of poverty, of HIV/AIDS and more recently of COVID. Everything that can happen, happens more to women. They're still subject to disproportionate percentages of domestic violence, rape, prejudice, discrimination, all sorts of things, and it's very sobering and also just extraordinary to think that this work is going on, it's still *desperately* needed, but it all started because of the faithful response of Florence Li Tim-Oi back in 1944 when she said yes to being ordained as a priest even though she knew she would be the first

one in the Anglican communion. I would like to end with a prayer that was prepared for the Li Tim-Oi Foundation, and it's something that we use when we have our meetings and this is what we pray:

*Empowering God, you chose one woman to be the mother of your son and another woman to witness his Resurrection. You chose your beloved daughter, Li Tim-Oil, to be a priest in your church. Where the need is greatest, you now call women to be ministers of change in your church and in their communities. Enable the Li Tim-Oil Foundation to empower each of them to fulfil their vocation, that your kingdom may come and your will be done on earth as in heaven, today and in the days to come. Amen*



**Canon Christopher Hall,**  
*who had known Tim-Oi when as a little boy in China,  
his father, the Rt Revd R O Hall, ordained her.*

### **Music in Hampstead by Geoffrey Whitworth**

Hampstead Music Club has friendly concert meetings free to all to come and watch or to join and participate. **Meetings are on Tuesdays during 7.30pm to 9.30 pm**, approximately every 3 weeks. The location, about a mile away from GGPC, is **Fellowship House, 136A Willifield Way NW11 6YD**. Refreshments are available around 8.30 pm. Nearest bus stop is Child's Way NW11, 1 mile from Golders Green tube and bus stations, 4 bus stops on the 102, 13 or 460 bus route starting under the Tube bridge. Fellowship House is a 2 to 3 minute walk from the bus-stop (along Child's Way).

The next meeting is on **Tuesday 06 February 2024**. GGPC's pianist and organist Geoffrey is a regular participant and accompanist at the Hampstead Music club. He will be playing then. There will be singing and chamber music. There is another HMC meeting at **Fellowship House on Tuesday 27 February 2024, 7.30 pm**. All are very welcome to come.





### How We Are

We send all those who are sick our love. Please continue to pray for all who have been unwell that they may gain in strength and good health as well as those who are grieving because of loss of a loved one.

A card of condolence has been sent to John Mabblerley, Margaret Morgan's brother, from us saying how much we appreciated her service to this church and all she did for us. We pray for her with love and gratitude.

**Kelly's Father, John Rudge**, had promising results from his examination at his last appointment. He is to be admitted for an operation soon and there is optimism about the outcome. Kelly sends her thanks to us for all our prayers and for God's healing hand to continue giving him health and strength.

We keep in our prayers **Sheila Grodzinki, Anita and Simon, David Agbim, Chuba Agbim, Eunice Adiele, Gideon Onwutalu, Annie Bwanaope and Rose Ochwada**. We hold them in our hearts that they may be filled with God's healing love.

Please pray for a full return to health for **Tony**. We pray that God's healing spirit may come upon him and help him make a good recovery.

Please **pray for Sisi**, Rose's daughter, who is recovering from an operation in Darlington and **Afi**, Rose's son, who is suffering from Covid. We send our love and prayers and hope for a good recovery.

Please continue to let us know of family members and friends who are sick and would welcome our prayers, either by WhatsApp, email, [Kamran@gg-pc.co.uk](mailto:Kamran@gg-pc.co.uk) or by phone, **020 8455 1873**

### Jesus on the Margins - *Anderson Jeremiah* \*

Don't forget the On-line event from St Paul's Cathedral with our new **Bishop of Edmonton in discussion with Paula Gooder** on "Jesus in the Margins" on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February between 7.00 and 7.45pm. \*





## **Jesus on the Margins**

### ***Anderson Jeremiah***

**Premieres online on Tuesday 6th February, 7.00-7.45pm**

Online event premiered on YouTube and then available on catch-up.

Anderson Jeremiah and Paula Gooder talk about Jesus in the Bible, in history, and in our lives. They explore his suffering, death and resurrection, how much stories and images of him matter, and how we can live as disciples of Jesus today. We also hear something of Anderson's own faith story, his influences in Black, Dalit and Liberation Theologies, and his journey from Dalit background in South India to his life as a priest and scholar in the UK today.

The Revd Canon Dr Anderson Jeremiah takes up the role of Bishop of Edmonton in the diocese of London from spring 2024. Previous to this, at Lancaster University he has been Senior Lecturer and Associate Dean (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and People) in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences while serving as associate priest of St Paul's, Scotforth, in the diocese of Blackburn.

Dr Paula Gooder is Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral, a distinguished New Testament scholar and the author of numerous popular and academic books.

The event is free, but if you are able to make a donation to the continuing learning programme at St Paul's Cathedral when you register for the event we would be very grateful.

[Register now](#)

## **Prayers with Kamran**

From Mondays to Thursdays, Kamran will be in church at 9.00am for a short time of prayer with anyone who would like to join him. Kamran will also be in church each day for those who would like to visit and talk with him. Please consider making an appointment to ensure that he will be available to meet with you;

### **Topic: Church Wardens' Personal Meeting Room**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8585545365?pwd=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0xDaDhY2paUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365

Passcode: J4FbKf

**Reader:**

**Hospitality:**

**AV Desk:**

**Contact details:**

Parish Priest: Revd Kamran Bhatti

Office Tel: 020 8455 1873, Website: [www.gg-pc.co.uk](http://www.gg-pc.co.uk)

**Intercession:**

**Eucharist Minister:**

## **Services and Event dates for GGPC 2024**

### **Services**

- Ash Wednesday - 14 February at 6:30 pm
- World day of pray - 1st March (venue to be confirm)
  
- Maundy (Holy) Thursday – 28 March 5 pm ???
- Asian Lent Service - 28 March 6 pm
  
- Good Friday - 29 March at 10 am
- Stations of the cross ???
  
- Easter Sunday – 31 March 10 am
- Ascension Day (Thursday) 9 May at 7 pm
- Pentecost Sunday – 19 May
- Trinity Sunday – 26 May
- Harvest Sunday - 22 September
- All Saints' Day – 1 November
- Christ the king Sunday - 24 November
- Carol Service – 22 December

### **Social Events**

#### Ideas

1. picnic on Hampstead Heath with a visit to the newly renovated Kenwood House;
2. A retreat with an inspiring speaker.
3. re- engaging with the St Alban's Abbey Festival Day in June
4. perhaps a visit to Canterbury Cathedral and a guided tour round the Cathedral.
5. Joint BBQ - 21 July (Sunday)

## GGPC Rota February 2024

| February 24              |                       |           |             |              |                      |         |              |                |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|----------------------|---------|--------------|----------------|
| Date                     | Bible Passage         | Readers   | Intercessor | Refreshments | Eucharistic Minister | AV Desk | Duty Manager | Service leader |
| 04/02/24                 | 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 | Khan      | Jenny       | Naila        | Ezim/Daniel          | Tony    | Cyntia       |                |
|                          | Mark 1:29-39          |           |             |              |                      |         |              |                |
| 11/02/24                 | 2 Corinthians 4:3-6   | Elizabeth | Alexis      | Silvia       | Sally/Tony           | Onyeka  | Florance     |                |
|                          | Mark 9:2-9            |           |             |              |                      |         |              |                |
| 18/02/24                 | 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 | Sam       | Anne        | Sally        | Ifeyinwe/Onyeka      | Dozie   | Tim          | Jenny          |
|                          | Mark 1:40-45          |           |             |              |                      |         |              |                |
| 25/02/24                 | 2 Corinthians 1:18-22 | Abi       | Nehar       | Nehar/Chinwe | Tim/Naila            | Ruth    | Chinwe       |                |
| <b>Bring &amp; Share</b> | Mark 2:1-12           |           |             |              |                      |         |              |                |
| 03/03/24                 | 2 Corinthians 3:1-6   | Keith     | Nwando      | Ezim         | Nwadi/Nehar          | Shaniv  | Alexis       | Alexis         |
|                          | Mark 2:13-22          |           |             |              |                      |         |              |                |